

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3009) to provide economic security for America's workers.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask for its second reading but object to my own request.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

#### MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 4691

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand that H.R. 4691 is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4691) to prohibit certain abortion-related discrimination in governmental activities.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for its second reading and object to my own request.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read a second time on the next legislative day.

#### MODIFICATION OF CONFEREES TO H.R. 4628

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the list of conferees for H.R. 4628, the intelligence authorization, be modified to include, from the Committee on Armed Services, Senators REED of Rhode Island and WARNER.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### VETERANS' AND SURVIVORS' BENEFITS EXPANSION ACT OF 2002

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Veterans' Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4085 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4085) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide a cost-of-living increase in the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disability and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses of such veterans, to expand certain benefits for veterans and their survivors, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, as chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I thank my colleagues in the Senate for their support of this legislation that will provide a cost-of-liv-

ing adjustment to veterans' compensation for next year. I thank my colleagues on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, ranking member ARLEN SPECTER, for his commitment to our Nation's veterans.

The Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2002 directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase, as of December 1, 2002, the rates of veterans' disability compensation, as well as compensation for eligible dependents and surviving spouses. The legislation raises compensation by the same percentage as the increase provided to Social Security recipients.

It is particularly important that we move this legislation as soon as possible. Veterans and their families depend on the cost-of-living increase to ensure that their well-deserved benefits are not eroded by inflation. Veterans' disability compensation rates must keep pace with the increasing cost of living.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the legislation be printed in the RECORD following this statement.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Rockefeller substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to; the act, as amended, be read a third time, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate; and that any statements related thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 4837) was agreed to, as follows:

#### AMENDMENT NO. 4837

(Purpose: To propose a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2002".

#### SEC. 2. INCREASE IN RATES OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, effective on December 1, 2002, increase the dollar amounts in effect for the payment of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation by the Secretary, as specified in subsection (b).

(b) AMOUNTS TO BE INCREASED.—The dollar amounts to be increased pursuant to subsection (a) are the following:

(1) COMPENSATION.—Each of the dollar amounts in effect under section 1114 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDENTS.—Each of the dollar amounts in effect under section 1115(1) of such title.

(3) CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.—The dollar amount in effect under section 1162 of such title.

(4) NEW DIC RATES.—The dollar amounts in effect under paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1311(a) of such title.

(5) OLD DIC RATES.—Each of the dollar amounts in effect under section 1311(a)(3) of such title.

(6) ADDITIONAL DIC FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES WITH MINOR CHILDREN.—The dollar amount in effect under section 1311(b) of such title.

(7) ADDITIONAL DIC FOR DISABILITY.—The dollar amounts in effect under sections 1311(c) and 1311(d) of such title.

(8) DIC FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN.—The dollar amounts in effect under sections 1313(a) and 1314 of such title.

(c) DETERMINATION OF INCREASE.—(1) The increase under subsection (a) shall be made in the dollar amounts specified in subsection (b) as in effect on November 30, 2002.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (3), each such amount shall be increased by the same percentage as the percentage by which benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) are increased effective December 1, 2002, as a result of a determination under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)).

(3) Each dollar amount increased pursuant to paragraph (2) shall, if not a whole dollar amount, be rounded down to the next lower whole dollar amount.

(d) SPECIAL RULE.—The Secretary may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons within the purview of section 10 of Public Law 85-857 (72 Stat. 1263) who are not in receipt of compensation payable pursuant to chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code.

#### SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF ADJUSTED RATES.

At the same time as the matters specified in section 215(i)(2)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)(2)(D)) are required to be published by reason of a determination made under section 215(i) of such Act during fiscal year 2003, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register the amounts specified in subsection (b) of section 2, as increased pursuant to that section.

Amend the title to read: "An Act to increase, effective as of December 1, 2002, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans.".

The bill (H.R. 4085), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

The amendment to the title was agreed to.

#### VETERANS BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2002

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 542, S. 2237.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2237) to amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance compensation for veterans with hearing loss, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

[Matter to be stricken is shown in black brackets. Matter to be added is shown in *italic*.]

S. 2239

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

[This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Hearing Loss Compensation Act of 2002".]